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Hussein's distrust of Soviet intentions probably would deter him in the near term from turning to Moscow as a principal arms supplier to Jordan. If the King, however, is unable to meet even a few of his major military requirements with West European or US equipment, he may feel impelled to make at least a symbolic purchase of major equipment--such as fighter aircraft--from Moscow. [REDACTED]

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Although Jordan traditionally has been a moderate, pro-Western state which has long valued its ties to the United States, King Hussein always has kept the channels of communication open with the Soviet Union. Amman's contacts with Moscow have been growing since the first Soviet-Jordanian arms deal in 1981, but US Embassy officials note that Hussein has expanded the relationship during the past year as his frustration has grown with what he sees as the unresponsive attitude in the United States for Jordan's security needs. [REDACTED]

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King Hussein's interest in developing ties to the Soviet Union stems primarily from his desire to fill Jordan's military equipment needs and his inability to acquire or secure financing for the purchase of weapon systems in the West. Jordan's military forces are considerably weaker than those of its neighbors and will remain so despite a military modernization program.* Without at least minimal force improvements Jordan will have difficulty even mounting an effective delaying action if its most likely adversary--Syria--were to decide to attack. According to US Embassy officials [REDACTED] Hussein is deeply concerned about the impact of Jordan's declining military capabilities and believes he must seek alternative sources of equipment if the US continues to deny what he believes to be Jordan's minimum military requirements. [REDACTED]

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The King's Disappointment in US Support

Hussein has been frustrated by Washington's seeming acceptance of what he sees as aggressive Israeli actions over the last several years, particularly the invasion of Lebanon, expanded West Bank settlement activity and harsh treatment of

* This program is designed primarily to improve the general force structure and combat capability of the armed forces to deter or counter an attack on Jordan. Jordanian military planners have told US military officials that they recognize that it will not give Jordan the capability to defeat Israel, Syria or Iraq on the battlefield, but they believe it will improve Jordan's ability to inflict heavier losses, which could delay defeat and possibly deter an attack. [REDACTED]

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Arab residents in the occupied territories. Hussein believes the US position only reinforces the Arab perception that the US gives unquestioned support to Tel Aviv and allows Israel to interfere in US policymaking. [REDACTED]

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The King believes that Jordan in particular has been a victim of Israeli interference, citing Congressional opposition to the provision of sophisticated weaponry to his country. According to US Embassy officials, Hussein interprets Washington's denial of US weapons in part as punishment for his inability to commit himself to peace negotiations with Israel. He questions whether the United States understands his argument that he must acquire more sophisticated military systems to safeguard Jordan's security against Arab opponents and to reassure his own forces. He believes the recent attacks by Syrian-backed Palestinian radicals on Jordanian interests in country and abroad should underscore the threat that Jordan faces in trying to promote peace. Although attacks on Jordan thus far have been isolated terrorist incidents, Hussein fears that Syria will take military action against Jordan if he directly enters peace negotiations with Israel. [REDACTED]

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The King is aware that some US legislators believe Jordan might feel less urgency to make peace with Israel if the United States agreed to give him weapons. In our view, however, US weapons sales to Jordan would not reduce Hussein's desire to settle the Arab-Israeli problem. US Embassy officials believe the King may actually be more willing to risk making a commitment if he is less concerned about Jordan's ability to deter or counter an attack from Syria. [REDACTED]

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Although Hussein has told US officials that he would prefer to "buy American", he argues that Jordan's critical military requirements prevent him from waiting too long for a favorable political climate in Washington. We believe Hussein's first choice for further acquisitions after the United States is Western Europe. He shares the political moderation of West European states and believes their military technology is more sophisticated than that of the Soviet Union. He has already discussed aircraft and air defense equipment, such as the Mirage 2000 and the Javelin, with the French and the British, but he does not have enough money to cover the cost of a major West European arms purchase. The King will try to persuade the Saudis to provide additional funds for arms purchases, although we believe he is likely to have only modest success. [REDACTED]

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Arms Deal with the Soviets

King Hussein's frustration over Jordan's financial constraints and inability to acquire adequate air defense equipment was a major factor in his decision to conclude the first Soviet arms agreement for 20 SA-8s and 16 ZSU-23-4s in 1981. [REDACTED] the King was considering purchasing Soviet equipment as early as 1968 and by 1978 or 1979

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he was seeking help from several Arab leaders, including Libyan leader Qaddafi, to arrange the deal. [REDACTED]

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The King's decision to "go Soviet" also was influenced by the more practical considerations of financing and delivery schedules. Only the Soviet Union and the United States offered long-term low-interest loans needed by Jordan. West European dealers apparently were not as accommodating. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets also offered a faster delivery schedule than the United States--a few months rather than the US multi-year schedule. [REDACTED]

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Details of the second Soviet-Jordanian arms deal concluded last December are closely held. US Embassy officials report that the amount of the purchase exceeded \$300 million and included:

- SA-13 surface-to-air missile system
- SA-14 short-range air defense missiles
- more ZSU-23/4 antiaircraft guns
- possibly more SA-8 antiaircraft missiles
- a large number of Kalashnikov rifles.

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The King limited the number of Soviet military technicians and advisers in Jordan since the first delivery of equipment to 30, but he now may need a larger Soviet presence. The SA-13 is a relatively new system to the Middle East--only known to be in Syria and possibly Algeria. Jordan probably will require additional Soviet technicians to aid in training on the new system. We believe Hussein will continue to try to minimize the Soviet presence, however, by sending Jordanian military officers to the Soviet Union for their training. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the Jordanians have not been thoroughly satisfied with the quality of some Soviet equipment and support. They were disappointed, for example, with the results of tests of the SA-8 missile system; only one of the five missiles fired reportedly hit the target. [REDACTED]

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Amman also believes the Soviets have misrepresented the type of equipment they are offering. [redacted]

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[redacted] when the Jordanians requested the most recently produced SA-8s, the Soviets showed them an older model still being produced. [redacted]

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[redacted] for air defense equipment. [redacted]

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The King's Attitude toward the Soviets

We believe Hussein remains highly skeptical of Soviet intentions in the region [redacted]

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[redacted] While the King's security services have a good record for monitoring Soviet activities in Jordan, they must be concerned about Soviet backing of Syria and Palestinian radicals. [redacted]

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US Embassy officials note that Hussein has expressed irritation with Soviet officials for not being more supportive of his current diplomatic efforts with PLO Chairman Arafat. He understands Moscow's concern not to alienate Syrian President Assad, but he believes the Soviets should be encouraged by Jordan's advocacy of an international peace conference including the Soviet Union. [redacted] Moscow's decision not to send a representative to the November 1984 Palestine National Council in Amman and its public criticism of the 11 February PLO-Jordan accord have cooled Hussein's enthusiasm for expanded USSR-Jordan relations for now. [redacted]

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Outlook

The scope of Soviet-Jordanian ties will continue to hinge on Hussein's ability to acquire economic and military support in the US and Western Europe. We believe the King's expectations of a favorable response from the United States are higher now than they have been for several years. [redacted]

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The King believes 1985 is a year for progress, according to US Embassy officials. He sees President Reagan's reelection and the election of Prime Minister Peres as auspicious signs. The King also believes that the PLO's internal crisis and consequent weakening of Arafat's leadership provide him with greater opportunities to win PLO cooperation in entering peace negotiations. Hussein undoubtedly hopes that the US will view his success in getting Arafat's signature on the 11 February accord as proof that he is meeting US requirements to move on the peace front and that this will win him Congressional approval for more military assistance. [redacted]

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If US Aid Is Not Forthcoming? We believe the King would view another postponement or defeat in Congress of an arms package for Jordan as a major blow. Under such circumstances,

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[redacted]

the possibility of Hussein downgrading Jordan's ties with the US and turning to the Soviet Union as a principal arms supplier for Jordan cannot be excluded. The King once before broke off a longstanding political and military relationship in 1956 when he dismissed Glubb Pasha, the British commander of the Arab Legion. Relations with Great Britain were strained for many years afterwards. [redacted]

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We believe, however, that such a dramatic change is unlikely in the near term. The King personally values his close ties to the United States and he believes that only the United States can influence Israel on the Palestinian issue. Moreover, despite US opposition to selling arms to Jordan, special security programs have been established with Amman--such as detection of Syrian and Palestinian infiltrators attempting to cross the border--that Hussein considers important to safeguarding Jordan's security.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted] that the Jordanians continue to regard the quality of US equipment, US training and maintenance support, and US [redacted] as second to none. More difficult to assess, but certainly a factor in their considerations is the human side of the military relationship. A generation of Jordanian military personnel has been trained in the United States and take pride in friendships established throughout this country. [redacted]

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What If Jordan Receives Partial Support? Jordan may slow its efforts to find alternative weapons suppliers if the US provides a small part of its requested arms, but we do not believe it will end such efforts. According to US Embassy officials, Hussein's problems with US security assistance programs have convinced him of the need to diversify Jordan's sources of equipment. [redacted]

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Hussein's first choice for further arms purchases after the US will remain Western Europe. The Jordanians recently have formed a committee to consider the problems of paying for arms acquisitions from Britain and France, suggesting that they have not given up on western arms. [redacted]

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We believe the Jordanians would turn to the Soviets as a major arms supplier only as a last resort. The King would be reluctant to make other major purchases from the Soviets--such as fighter aircraft--primarily because of the large number of Soviet advisers such a deal would bring to Jordan. He may feel pushed to make a symbolic purchase, however, to underscore Jordan's need for such equipment. [redacted]

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SUBJECT: JORDAN-USSR: The View from Amman

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